

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An assembly suitable for use in a motor vehicle, comprising:

5 an audio system including at least one speaker, the audio system being enabled to receive a mute signal and to respond to the mute signal by muting the audio system output;

10 a control system coupled to the audio system and enabled to respond to a signal indicative of an incoming call or message to any of two or more wireless devices within the motor vehicle by asserting the mute signal to mute the output of the audio system.

15 2. The assembly of claim 1, wherein the indicative signal is a ringing signal produced by any of the two or more of the wireless devices and wherein the control system includes an audio input to detect the ringing signal.

20 3. The assembly of claim 2, further comprising a set of audio detectors positioned within the vehicle to detect the ringing of any of the wireless devices, each of the audio detectors being coupled to the audio input port.

25 4. The assembly of claim 2, wherein the control system is further enabled to learn characteristics of the ringing signal of a particular wireless device, and wherein the control system is enabled to respond with the mute signal selectively to learned ringing signals.

30 5. The assembly of claim 1, wherein the indicative signal is generated by the wireless communication device in response to the wireless device receiving an incoming call or message.

6. The assembly of claim 5, wherein the indicative signal is a non-audible signal.

7. The assembly of claim 6, wherein the non-audible signal comprises an infrared signal and further wherein the control system includes an infrared port enabled to receive the infrared signal.

8. The assembly of claim 6, wherein the non-audible signal comprises a radio frequency signal and further wherein the control system includes an antenna suitable for receiving the radio frequency signal.

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9. The assembly of claim 8, wherein the radio signal is a Bluetooth compliant signal.

10. The assembly of claim 6, wherein the indicative signal is a digital signal transmitted from the wireless device to the control system via a cable connecting at least one of the wireless devices to a digital input port of the control system.

11. The assembly of claim 1, wherein the indicative signal is a signal transmitted to any of the wireless devices by a wireless service provider and further wherein the control system is enabled to detect the transmitted signal .

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12. The assembly of claim 11, wherein the control system includes means for enabling a user to specify telephone numbers of wireless devices to define the set of wireless devices for which the control system asserts the mute signal.

20 13. A wireless communication device including means for transmitting a radio frequency signal, to mute an audio system in proximity to the wireless communication device, responsive to the wireless device receiving an incoming call or message.

25 14. The wireless communication device of claim 13, wherein the radio frequency signal generated by the wireless device has a range of less than 50 meters.

15. The wireless communication device of claim 13, wherein the radio frequency signal comprises a Bluetooth compliant signal.

30 16. The wireless communication device of claim 13, wherein the radio frequency signal comprises a WiFi compliant signal.

17. The wireless communication device of claim 13, wherein, in addition to indicating the incoming call or message, the radio frequency signal generated by the wireless device is indicative of the phone number from which the call or message originated.

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18. An assembly within a motor vehicle, comprising:

means for detecting a signal generated by any of two or more wireless communication devices responsive to receiving an incoming call or message; and

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means for muting an audio system of the motor vehicle responsive to the detecting means.

19. The assembly of claim 18, wherein the generated signal comprises a signal selected from the set of signals consisting of an audible signal, an infrared signal, and a short range radio frequency signal.

20. The assembly of claim 18, wherein the means for detecting are further characterized as means for detecting a signal generated by a selected wireless communication device.

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21. The assembly of claim 18, wherein the means for muting the audio system include means for restoring the audio system responsive to termination of the incoming call or message.